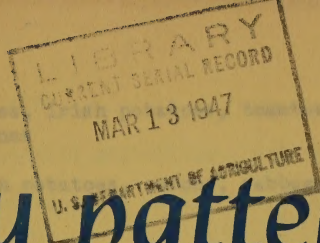


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Timely Topics for the Food Page Editor

January 6, 1947

BEST FRESH FOOD BUYS

"Best buy" leaders during the first week of 1947 are oranges, grapefruit, onions and Irish potatoes, according to USDA's Production and Marketing Administration. This is a status carried over from 1946 but in the case of citrus especially homemakers will find prices lower than during December.

Rounding out the week's "best buys" are apples in the fruit group, cabbage and sweetpotatoes from the vegetable counter.

"Best buys" at key markets

ARKANSAS: Jonesboro.....Irish potatoes, onions, Texas oranges
Little Rock.....spinach, onions, red potatoes, Texas oranges and grapefruit
Pine Bluff.....oranges, lettuce, Irish potatoes, yellow onions, greens

COLORADO: Denver.....cabbage, carrots, grapefruit, onions, oranges, parsnips, spinach, Irish potatoes, celery, cauliflower

(more)

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KANSAS: Manhattan.....apples, oranges, Irish potatoes, tomatoes, cabbage, bananas

LOUISIANA: Baton Rouge.....oranges, Irish potatoes, onions, cabbage, grapefruit

MISSOURI: Kansas City.....Irish potatoes, turnips, cauliflower, cabbage, onions, oranges, grapefruit

NEW MEXICO: Alamogordo.....Irish potatoes, cabbage, turnips, pepper, green beans

Gallup.....head lettuce, Irish potatoes, grapefruit, oranges

OKLAHOMA: Ada.....cauliflower, beans, celery, onions, Irish potatoes, cabbage, grapefruit, oranges, sweetpotatoes, apples, lettuce

Ardmore.....grapefruit, oranges, celery, Irish potatoes, onions

Enid.....apples, oranges, Irish potatoes, cranberries, cabbage, carrots, celery, grapefruit, sweetpotatoes, lettuce

Oklahoma City.....apples, cabbage, cauliflower, grapefruit, lettuce, Irish and sweetpotatoes

Tulsa.....Irish potatoes, onions, celery

TEXAS: Amarillo.....small oranges, grapefruit, onions, Irish and sweetpotatoes, apples, cabbage

Austin.....Irish potatoes, onions, spinach, carrots, cabbage, radishes, cauliflower, Texas citrus fruit, avacados

Dallas.....apples, Irish and sweetpotatoes, cabbage, beans, onions, cranberries, Texas citrus

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RICE NEWS

Look for more rice on grocer's shelves during the first quarter of 1947 than in the same period last year. Civilian allocation is 250 million pounds --nearly double the first quarter allocation in 1946. This amount represents 41 percent of the total allocable supply. The rest is reserved for export or for use by military and war services.

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GRAPEFRUIT ON THE MENU

Ease of preparation is one reason for grapefruit popularity. All that's necessary is to cut the fruit in half and serve. But for easier eating, take out the seeds and center core and cut between the sections. Most folks prefer grapefruit "as is" but sometimes there's a call for salt or sugar.

Hot broiled grapefruit is excellent to reign over the dinner first course. It's prepared this way: Cut the grapefruit in half, take out the core and seeds. Sprinkle generously with sugar and add a little butter if richer flavor is wanted. Then put the halves in a hot broiler--just like a steak or chops. Have the heat high, and in 10 to 15 minutes there'll be flecks of brown on the fruit. That means the grapefruit is heated through and ready to serve. This same broiled grapefruit also makes a dandy dessert after a filling meal.

This should be an excellent time for homemakers to stock up on homemade marmalade--provided, of course, there's sugar to spare. Grapefruit has all the qualities needed for the chief ingredient--color and flavor in the peel, pectin in the inner rind, acid in the juice. The grapefruit may be used alone or with oranges and lemons in the classic amber marmalade.

With grapefruit so plentiful, homemakers may find it worth while to conserve sugar elsewhere in order to make some jellied grapefruit peel for a delicious sweetmeat. Orange and lemon peels also may be used, for variety.

Not all grapefruit recipes call for sugar. Many--especially the salads and fruit cups--are real sugar-savers. Here's a classic salad recipe from USDA's Bureau of Human Nutrition and Home Economics: Peel the grapefruit, pull it apart in sections, then strip the skin and pith from each section. Arrange the sections on lettuce, sprinkle with chopped nuts, and garnish with a little pimienta. Serve with any desired dressing. Variations combine the grapefruit with other fruits, such as oranges, dates, and pineapple.

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BARGAIN SHELF

Unusual sidelight on plentiful items this year is the case of cranberries. Southwest markets normally begin to receive small quantities in September and the supply keeps coming in from northern producing areas until after Christmas. Peak is nearly always reached in November--around Thanksgiving. This year cranberries were about as plentiful at Christmas as they were at Thanksgiving and joined the list of marked-down items right after New Year's. They're still quite plentiful. Some grocers report difficulty in disposing of stocks--even at reduced prices.

The longer than usual period of availability this season results from the large 1946 crop. Under favorable conditions for growing and harvesting, farmers produced 846,200 barrels--29 percent above the crop in 1945 and 36 percent larger than the 1935-44 average.

Cranberries contribute liberal amounts of vitamin C to nutritional needs more, of course, when the berries are used raw than when they're cooked. This makes the cranberry-orange relish - so popular during the holidays - a good suggestion for January meals too, especially since oranges also are among the "best buys" at the present time.

Another citrus-cranberry combination calls for chilled grapefruit sections with cranberry juice poured over them.

Cranberry juice by itself makes an excellent appetizer. Or chilled cranberry juice may be mixed with sweet pineapple juice, cider or gingerale. Then, of course, there's cranberry sauce and jelly which may be used in many ways. For instance, USDA's nutritionists suggest a cranberry-raisin pie, in which hot cranberry sauce is combined with raisins that have been soaked in hot water until they're plump. This makes a tasty filling to be added to pastry shells just before serving.

TANGERINE TIME

January is peak month for one of our most romantic fruits--the tangerine. This daintiest of the citrus family--easy to peel, delicious to eat--has a family history 4,000 years old. Mandarin was its original name, and it came from China. Like the satsuma, it's a cultural development of the mandarin-orange.

First tangerines were planted in this country about 75 years ago. Today they grow wherever other citrus grows, although Florida is the only state with enough to count separately from oranges in the Department of Agriculture's crop reports. All indications point to good supplies this year. Florida expects to have about 5,200,000 boxes compared with 4,200,000 in 1945, 4,000,000 in 1944, and 2,980,000 average for the ten years 1935-44. Total orange and tangerine crops in other states are larger than usual this year. Already Texas growers have shipped more than 30 straight carloads and nearly 100 carload equivalents by truck, besides tangerines which moved in mixed lots with other fruit.

Like other citrus, the tangerine is rich in vitamin C and contains some mineral values. Nutritionists say tangerines also have valuable amounts of vitamin A because of the deep orange color.

A good tangerine, like a good orange, is fairly firm and has a fine-textured skin. But because the skin is loose, even good tangerines may feel a bit puffy. So the best way to judge is to choose fruit that feel rather heavy for their size--that means they're juicy. And as a rule the deeper-colored ones are the best-flavored.

Tangerines may not be as good a buy as oranges, from the cost standpoint, because they're never as plentiful. But they should be in fair supply during the next few weeks--at the most reasonable prices of the season.

JANUARY PLENTIFULS

Texas spinach is one of the items on the national list of plentiful foods for January. Spinach in straight carload lots also is rolling out of Arkansas and Oklahoma at the present. The local supply should be good in all consuming markets.

USDA's marketing specialists also expect good supplies of potatoes and onions. In the fruit line, January promises plenty of apples, dried peaches, fresh oranges and grapefruit, and canned citrus juices. Meat counters should have a good many heavy tom turkeys and plenty of fresh and frozen fish. Not shellfish, though--that's still in the scarcer group of foods. Almonds and filberts from this year's large crops will be in good supply.

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PEAKING ITEMS

Local vegetables deserving a special push during the next few weeks include broccoli, cauliflower, and cabbage. Broccoli usually reaches the peak of supply at southwest markets during February. Cauliflower was plentiful during most of December and will probably remain so throughout January. New crop cabbage is already on the "best buy" list at the majority of southwest consuming centers. Supplies should increase, reaching a peak sometime between February and April.

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SPECIALTIES

Luxury items now available on wholesale food markets include winter strawberries from Florida and Texas. Supply is light and prices high, but these harbingers of spring make for variety and good eating where the budget can afford them.

Some of the Texas berries have taken to the air for northern destinations. Consuming centers in the southwest receive supplies mostly by rail and truck.

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Timely Topics for the Food Page Editor

January 13, 1947

BEST FRESH FOOD BUYS

First on the food shopping list this week is citrus fruit. Both oranges and grapefruit are plentiful at all key markets, with peak movement expected in the next few weeks, according to USDA's Production and Marketing Administration.

Prices have gotten down to a very reasonable level, especially when food value is considered. Both oranges and grapefruit are rich in vitamin C and contain some vitamin B and minerals. Oranges also have vitamin A, which makes them an extra-special food bargain at present prices.

Best vegetable buys are Irish potatoes and onions. One reason is continued liberal supply of both these stand-by foods. Another is the fact many locally produced vegetables normally plentiful at this season were scarce in many city stores recently because cold, wet weather held up harvest and shipments. Cabbage falls in this group, along with turnips, spinach and other greens.

Fair selections include lettuce, celery and cauliflower. Plenty of apples are still available and grocers report lower prices, an unusual trend for this season of the year when most offerings come from storage.

Production and Marketing Administration, USDA
Information Service
425 Wilson Building
Dallas 1, Texas

"Best buys" at key markets

ARKANSAS: Jonesboro.....Irish potatoes, onions, cabbage, Texas oranges
 Little Rock.....Irish potatoes, onions, cauliflower, apples,
 oranges, grapefruit

 Pine Bluff.....lettuce, celery, Irish potatoes, oranges

COLORADO: Denver.....carrots, grapefruit, onions, oranges, parsnips,
 spinach, Irish potatoes, celery, cauliflower,
 beets

KANSAS: Manhattan.....grapefruit, Irish potatoes, oranges, cabbage,
 grapes, tomatoes

LOUISIANA: Baton Rouge.....Irish potatoes, lettuce, oranges, onions,
 cabbage, apples, grapefruit

 New Orleans.....onions, Irish potatoes

MISSOURI: Kansas City.....homegrown turnips, parsnips, California and
 Arizona cauliflower, onions, Irish potatoes,
 grapefruit, oranges

NEW MEXICO Alamogordo.....cabbage, green onions, peppers

 Gallup.....grapefruit, oranges, Irish potatoes

OKLAHOMA: Ada.....lettuce, sweet potatoes, cauliflower, grapefruit,
 apples, Irish potatoes, celery, grapes, tomatoes

 Ardmore.....oranges, grapefruit, Irish potatoes, onions,
 celery

 Enid.....oranges, Irish potatoes, onions, apples, cabbage,
 lettuce, carrots, cranberries

 Oklahoma City....apples, carrots, celery, grapefruit, lettuce,
 onions, Irish and sweetpotatoes

 Tulsa.....lemons, Irish potatoes, onions, carrots,
 grapefruit

(more)

ONION SPECIAL

We ate lots of onions as they came to market, but we didn't eat them all. Many with good keeping quality went into storage. They'll be available well into the spring. Then, too, farmers still have large quantities on their own hands. They were busy with other work earlier in the season and the onions were not needed in retail stores at that time, so farmers kept them. These onions also will be available for winter and spring use. In addition, there's a larger than usual supply of the mild-flavored Sweet Spanish type which comes to market from western areas between November and January. These onions don't keep as well as some other kinds and must be sold now to prevent waste.

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Add all these together and we get a lot of onions in the next few weeks-- so many, in fact, that growers, food handlers and the Department of Agriculture are cooperating in a national campaign to move them. The week of January 27 through February 1 has been set aside as National Onion Week. During that time--and on into the spring--onions will be among food bargains at all stores. Price is far below a year ago, quality excellent.

As is usually the case when an item is very plentiful and reasonably-priced, homemakers reap big benefits in the form of food savings. Onions offer the extra advantage of flavor to combine with numerous other foods; or they can be served alone, either cooked or raw.

Here are half a dozen of the Bureau of Home Economics and Human Nutrition's most successful recipes:

Creamed Onions

Skin the onions, and if very large size, cut in halves or quarters. Start onions in boiling salted water (about 1 teaspoon salt to 1 quart water), using just enough water to cover. Cover the kettle, but be careful not to overcook - cook only until tender. Drain the onions, pour over them a white sauce of medium thickness, and sprinkle with paprika.

Onion Soup

Cook 2 cups finely chopped onions in 2 tablespoons fat until lightly brown. Sprinkle with 3 tablespoons of flour and stir. Add $1\frac{1}{2}$ quarts hot meat broth, made by cooking a soup bone in water, and stir until smooth. Season with salt and pepper and simmer until the onions are tender and flavor well blended.

Stewed Onions and Tomatoes

Stew sliced onions with tomatoes, thicken with a little flour or stale bread toasted and broken into small pieces.

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Onions au Gratin

Combine cooked onions with white sauce, with grated cheese added if desired. Cover with bread crumbs dotted with table fat or good-flavored drippings, and brown in moderate oven. This is an excellent way to use cooked onions in combination with other vegetables left in quantities too small to serve alone.

Scalloped Onions and Peanuts

Measure 3 cups of cooked onions, 1 cup of ground roasted peanuts, 2 cups of thin white sauce, 1 cup of bread crumbs blended with a little melted fat. (The crumbs may be made from bread too hard for table use, or from heels and other odds and ends.) In a baking dish, make alternate layers of onions, peanuts, and sauce; top with bread crumbs. Bake in a hot oven (400°F.) 20 minutes or until crumbs are brown.

Onion Sauce for Boiled Potatoes

Cook a cup of chopped or finely sliced onions in 2 to 3 tablespoons of fat until they turn yellow. Add 2 to 3 tablespoons of flour and stir until blended. Then gradually add a pint of cold milk. Stir and cook until smooth and thicken. Season to taste with salt and pepper. Just before serving add chopped parsley or celery tops.

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COCOA NEWS

USDA last week removed all import restrictions on cocoa beans, cocoa butter and unsweetened cocoa powder. This action followed termination of the war food order which controlled domestic distribution and use of cocoa during the war years. Since 1942 importers have been required to obtain a license from the U. S. Department of Agriculture in order to bring these products into the United States. Cocoa beans have been--and still remain--under worldwide allocation by the International Emergency Food Council.

--oOo--

BEANS AND PEAS

USDA allocated to civilians 89 percent of the dry beans and about 68 percent of dry peas expected to be available in the first three months of 1947. This means 2,229,400 hundred-pound bags of beans and 210,000 bags of peas--not as much as estimated civilian disappearance during the corresponding quarter of 1946--but there are larger stocks already in distribution centers.

--oOo--

CANNED BARGAINS

Citrus fruit bargains these days are not confined to fresh oranges and grapefruit. On the canned foods counter, thrifty homemakers will find plenty of orange and grapefruit juice at reasonable cost. Canned grapefruit segments are a good buy, too.

Luxury item, climbing in popularity, is tangerine juice which made its first appearance last year (production totaled half a million cases out of the total citrus juice pack of 65 million) and is scheduled for increased supply in 1947 because the fresh tangerine crop is the largest ever.

All these canned citrus items offer busy homemakers a quick, yet economical, way of keeping daily meals high in food value. Like the fresh fruit, they are rich sources of vitamin C and contain some minerals and vitamin B₁. Orange juice, like fresh oranges, also has some vitamin A; this is probably also true of tangerine juice.

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Timely Topics for the Food Page Editor
January 20, 1947

BEST FRESH FOOD BUYS

Three vegetables and two fruits vie for attention on this week's list of best fresh food buys, according to USDA's Production and Marketing Administration. They are oranges and grapefruit, Irish potatoes, cabbage and onions.

Marketing specialists say grapefruit prices are as low as they've been in any recent winter and orange prices are lower than for many years. Nutritionists point out the high food value of citrus fruits makes them even a better buy than the per pound price indicates.

Irish potatoes and onions are old-timers on the "best buy" list. Both have been plentiful at reasonable prices throughout the fall and winter and are expected to remain so on into the spring.

Cabbage is not altogether a newcomer either, although a good many more markets included this nutritious vegetable on the "best buy" list than in recent weeks. Food handlers expect supplies in retail markets to increase with more favorable conditions for harvest and hauling the new crop. Prices have been on the downgrade recently, so homemakers should find cabbage easily within the food budget.

(more)

Production and Marketing Administration, USDA
Information Service
425 Wilson Building
Dallas 1, Texas

Spinach, broccoli and other greens also are good buys. Celery and lettuce remain among the best selections at many markets. Carrots also are a good choice. Apples are much less popular than they were a few weeks ago but are still the best fruit buy next to citrus.

"Best buys" at key markets

ARKANSAS: Fort Smith.....oranges, apples, onions, Irish potatoes
Jonesboro.....Irish potatoes, cabbage, Texas oranges,
onions
Little Rock.....Irish potatoes, cabbage, oranges, apples,
onions
Pine Bluff..... celery, Irish potatoes, onions, oranges

COLORADO: Denver.....grapefruit, lemons, oranges, cauliflower,
celery, onions, Irish potatoes

KANSAS: Manhattan.....Irish potatoes, apples, cabbage, grapefruit,
oranges

MISSOURI: Kansas City.....Irish potatoes, turnips, rutabagas,
grapefruit, oranges

LOUISIANA: Baton Rouge.....oranges, apples, Irish potatoes, onions,
cabbage, carrots
New Orleans.....cabbage, oranges, onions

NEW MEXICO: Alamogordo.....cabbage, pepper, carrots
Gallup.....grapefruit, oranges, Irish potatoes, lettuce

OKLAHOMA: Ada.....grapefruit, lettuce, cauliflower, Irish
and sweet potatoes, tomatoes, carrots,
celery
Enid.....oranges, grapefruit, apples, cranberries,
Irish potatoes, cabbage, carrots, onions
Oklahoma City....apples, cabbage, carrots, lemons, onions,
Irish and sweet potatoes
Tulsa.....grapefruit, cabbage, carrots

(more)

SALAD TIME

When it's a grapefruit salad milady wants, and time is short, canned grapefruit segments are the answer.

USDA's food specialists recommend the segments or sections served on a leaf of crisp lettuce, sprinkled with chopped nuts, garnished with a little pimiento, and topped with your favorite salad dressing.

Canned segments also combine well with other fruits for a variety of fresh-tasting, colorful, midwinter salads. Suggested teammates are orange, pineapple, dates or avocados.

These, and many other uses, are a good way to welcome the return of one of our favorite canned fruits. Like many other things, canned grapefruit segments practically disappeared from the consumer market during the war years when the entire pack was being bought for use by our armed forces. Last year, with the army no longer a customer, an average pre-war pack of about 2- 1/2 million cases was available to civilians. So far this year, more than 2 million cases have been processed, with four more months to go before the season ends.

Prices have dropped the last few months, making canned grapefruit segments a very good buy.

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ONION NOTE

USDA's food experts say the most important reason for eating onions is the flavor appeal. If that isn't enough to sell homemakers on the idea of using more onions, it may be added they also provide useful and satisfying bulk to the diet; and when onions are fresh and mature, they contain a fair amount of vitamin C and small amounts of the B complex vitamins and of the minerals calcium and iron.

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JUICE BARGAINS

In some areas of the country, canned citrus juice is now selling at less than a cent an ounce, according to marketing specialists of USDA's Production and Marketing Administration. The supply is bountiful because of a carryover from last year and a normal pack to date.

For the homemaker who prefers to squeeze the juice herself from fresh grapefruit or oranges, here's what the January crop report says about supply. Orange production for the 1946-47 season is expected to be more than 118-1/2 million boxes--18 percent larger than production in 1945-46 and nine percent more than the previous record in 1944-45. Grapefruit production is estimated at more than 66-1/2 million boxes--66 percent above average.

The price of fresh oranges and grapefruit has toppled downward in recent weeks too, so fresh juice is also a bargain.

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PORK POINTERS

Scientists of the U. S. Department of Agriculture think they've found the reason why ham sandwiches are so popular. It's because pork contains an abundance of the protein constituent, lysine (one of the amino acids essential for good nutrition), in which wheat flour and certain other cereal products are deficient.

Feeding tests revealed young rats deriving their protein from white bread gained 22 grams in a 30-day period, those fed white bread plus one percent of lysine gained 87 grams, and those receiving various cuts of pork together with bread 113 grams on the average.

Biological value of the protein in mixtures containing equal parts of pork and bread protein--roughly equivalent to a well-filled meat sandwich--was equal to that in pork alone. The investigators found also the protein constituents in fresh ham, loin, picnic shoulder and shoulder butt were of almost equal nutritive value.

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KEEP THE BOTTLES MOVING

Homemakers can do themselves and the dairy industry a good turn by keeping milk bottles in circulation. It's estimated about 25 million empty bottles have accumulated in American homes. C. M. Evans, chief, Dairy Branch, Dallas area office of USDA's Production and Marketing Administration, says these bottles are greatly needed to keep milk moving.

Replacing them is difficult under present conditions. Production of new bottles is running far behind demand because soda ash, one of the principal materials for glass manufacture, is very short. Also, the situation on cars for transporting either raw materials or finished bottles is tight. Not before the end of 1947 can we expect as many new bottles as are needed.

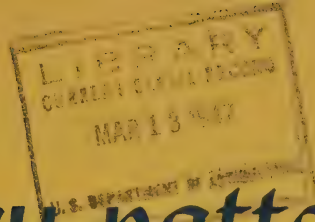
And, just to get an idea how many are needed, the dairyman must have about eight bottles for every one in consumer hands. He has to keep some on the way to retailers and homes, while others are being washed and filled.

A little more arithmetic gives the answer to just how much homemakers can help by turning in bottles on which they've paid deposits. Each has a life expectancy of 30 to 40 trips, which means 25 million idle bottles can deliver a lot of milk if put to work.

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Timely Topics for the Food Page Editor

January 27, 1947

BEST FRESH FOOD BUYS

Citrus fruit rates high on this week's list of best buys, according to USDA's Production and Marketing Administration. Oranges are the leader, with grapefruit close behind. Supplies are plentiful at prices low enough to keep meals rich in vitamin C with no strain on food budgets.

Other fruits on the best buy list include apples, pears, lemons, avocados and bananas, all good teammates for oranges and grapefruit in combination fruit cups and salads.

Onions and Irish potatoes are still the biggest bargains in vegetables. Cabbage is another good buy this week, with supplies from the new crop increasing and good quantities still coming from storage. Carrots are popular at nearly all markets for their good supply, high food value and reasonable cost. Celery and lettuce also are good selections.

"Best buys" at key markets

COLORADO: Denver.....grapefruit, lemons, oranges, cauliflower, celery, Irish potatoes, onions, parsnips

(more)

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Information Service
425 Wilson Building
Dallas 1, Texas

MISSOURI:	<u>Kansas City</u>homegrown turnips, parsnips, Nancy Hall sweetpotatoes, shipped-in cabbage, onions, celery, grapefruit, oranges, cooking apples
KANSAS:	<u>Manhattan</u>Irish potatoes, apples, oranges, pears, cabbage, cauliflower
LOUISIANA:	<u>Baton Rouge</u>Irish potatoes, oranges, carrots, onions, cabbage, celery
	<u>New Orleans</u>onions, oranges, Irish potatoes
NEW MEXICO:	<u>Albuquerque</u>Irish potatoes, onions, cabbage, carrots, beets, parsnips, lettuce, celery, citrus fruit
	<u>Las Cruces,</u> <u>Las Vegas</u> <u>& Santa Fe</u>Irish potatoes, onions, cabbage, carrots, beets, lettuce, celery, citrus fruits
	<u>Gallup</u>grapefruit, oranges, bananas, Irish potatoes, cabbage, onions
OKLAHOMA:	<u>Enid</u>Irish potatoes, oranges, grapefruit, celery, cranberries, onions
	<u>Oklahoma City</u> ... apples, cabbage, carrots, grapefruit, onions, oranges, Irish and sweet potatoes, turnips
TEXAS:	<u>Austin</u>Irish potatoes, onions, citrus fruits, carrots, mustard greens, celery, lettuce, avocados, rutabagas
	<u>Dallas</u>grapefruit, oranges, Irish potatoes, cabbage, carrots, apples, lettuce, celery
	<u>Fort Worth</u>cabbage, bunched carrots, Irish potatoes, onions, grapefruit, oranges
	<u>Houston</u>Irish and sweet potatoes, cabbage, carrots, onions, spinach, Texas citrus

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CHEESE IT

Look for more cheese as the season for increased milk production gets under way but don't be too choosy about the variety, say USDA's marketing specialists. They say there probably will be more natural aged cheese this year in contrast to the volume of processed or cheese foods in evidence during the war and the past year.

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FEBRUARY PREVUE

Several foods native to the southwest are expected to be plentiful on a nationwide scale during February.

Among these are fresh citrus fruits, canned citrus juices and canned grapefruit segments. Record-breaking orange and grapefruit crops hit the peak of the season about this time and prices in many instances are below the prewar level. Choice between fresh fruit and canned citrus products is a matter of preference and convenience. Both contribute liberal supplies of food value, especially vitamin C, at low cost.

Another southwest fruit in the national spotlight right now is dried peaches--result of the large fresh crop last summer together with reduced buying by the armed services, which during the war took most of the supply. Quality of offerings now available is very good, according to USDA's marketing specialists.

Peanut butter made from this year's two billion pound crop, a good part of which grew in the Southwest, is another national plentiful for February.

In the poultry department, the national list includes eggs and heavy tom turkeys, both important southwest products.

February plentifuls from storage bring to grocer's shelves all the Irish potatoes, onions and apples homemakers will need or want at reasonable prices.

Southwest grocers also will get their share of the good national supply of celery. Even now a good many consuming centers in this part of the country put celery from California, Florida and Michigan on the "best buy" list.

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MEAT REPORT

Meat produced in federally inspected plants during the week ended January 18 totaled 420 million pounds, six percent above the preceding week and nearly double a year ago when many plants were strike-bound part of the week. Total included 175 million pounds beef, 15.5 million pounds veal, 212 million pounds pork and 18 million pounds lamb and mutton.

Lard production amounted to 55.3 million pounds compared with 53.8 million in the preceding week and 22.7 million a year ago.

ONION STORY

During National Onion Week (that's this week--January 27 to February 1), homemakers will find the favorite of all vegetable flavor-foods on the bargain shelf with good supplies available in all stores. That's an inducement to buy and use more onions in daily menus.

These onions are coming from the late fall crop and from storage. And, incidentally, the latest BAE count of storage stocks - 11,502,000 fifty-pound sacks on January 1 - makes it easy to see why the supply is so abundant. Put those stocks up against those in other years and the comparison goes like this: second largest on record, nearly double the extremely light holdings a year ago, and 51 percent about the 1936-45 average for January 1.

And should any homemaker shy away from onions because they bring tears to the eyes, USDA's home economists suggest holding the onion under water while peeling it. This little trick also helps to keep the onion odor from spreading through the house.

NOTE TO FOOD EDITOR: If you have not already used the onion story and recipes in the January 13 issue of PANTRY PATTERN, you may want to do so this week while the big push is on.

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FROZEN POULTRY PEAK

Frozen poultry supplies, which usually reach the season's high in January or February, have grown rapidly in the last 30 years. The 1942-46 five-year average turkey holdings at the peak were ten times as great as a similar five-year average from 1917-1921, stocks of fowl were three times as great, stocks of roasters and fryers doubled.

Biggest year on record was 1946 when February holdings totaled 364 million pounds of all poultry. On January 1, this year, stocks amounted to 318 million pounds -- 17 million more than a month earlier, but 37 million below a year ago.

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BROILER SPECIAL

Probably the best buy in poultry during the next month or six weeks will be broilers. Supply is plentiful, price reasonable.

Already the big commercial producing areas are sending around 15 million pounds of fryers and broilers to market each week. This volume is expected to increase to between 20 and 23 million pounds a week during February and early March. A lot of these broilers are in the Southwest.

Marketing specialists of USDA's Production and Marketing Administration say broilers in some sections are selling below cost of production. They are cheaper than roasting or stewing chickens and even undersell the big tom turkeys, also in large supply.

Ideal for frying or barbecuing, as well as for broiling, these young, tender, soft-meated chickens usually reach local grocers "New York dressed" -- this is, picked but not drawn. Retailers draw, split or cut them up, as the customer wishes.

Frozen food stores sell broilers cut up and pan ready in frozen packages, but the price is higher than for fresh chickens.

--oOo--

BUTTER NOTE

Homemakers now should be able to buy butter at lower prices. The sharp wholesale drop during the past month amounted to at least 20 cents a pound.

Marketing specialists of the U. S. Department of Agriculture say a large share of the decrease resulted from two developments: (1) reduced consumer purchases before the price-break when butter prices were high in relation to other fats and oils; and (2) a more than normal increase in butter production since November. In other words, butter consumption did not keep pace with production.

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NO LONGER A NOVELTY

Many homemakers probably will buy their first dry milk this year.

Consumer-size packages are appearing generally on grocery shelves for the first time. Heretofore, the biggest user outside the armed services has been the baking industry. Only small amounts have been used in school lunches and home kitchens.

General availability in 1947 is the result of tripled production within the past 10 years, according to specialists of the U. S. Department of Agriculture. Production reached a record high of 863 million pounds in 1945, was nearly as large last year, and this year may be almost as much. Increase began largely in response to military and export needs for foods high in nutritive value but low in cost and volume during the war years.

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BREAKFAST CHEER

Oatmeal news is good. Marketing specialists of the U. S. Department of Agriculture tell us we'll have plenty to ship abroad to needy neighbors and plenty for ourselves in 1947. Rolled oats will be easy to find on the grocery shelf. And, as always, they'll bring with them a plentiful helping of protein, thiamine, iron and food energy.

This is quite an improvement over the situation last year, when most of the oats available were used for livestock feed because corn was scarce.

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